

Bill Summary

The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2026

- The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2026 was introduced in Lok Sabha on March 27, 2026. It seeks to amend 80 central Acts to decriminalise or rationalise offences and penalties. The Bill has been brought in place of the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025 introduced on August 18, 2025. The 2025 Bill sought to amend 17 central Acts, and was referred to a Select Committee of Lok Sabha (Chair: Mr. Tejasvi Surya). The Committee submitted its report on March 13, 2026 and recommended further changes to the 17 Acts, and also recommended amendments to 65 other Acts. The 2025 Bill was withdrawn on March 17, 2026.
- **Decriminalising offences:** The Bill decriminalises several offences, and instead imposes civil penalty for such offences. For instance, under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, manufacturing and sale of cosmetics in contravention of the Act is punishable with imprisonment up to one year, a fine up to Rs 20,000, or both. The Bill instead imposes a civil penalty of one lakh rupees or three times the value of cosmetics confiscated, whichever is higher. Similarly, under the National Highways Act, 1956, making a highway impassable or less safe is punishable with imprisonment up to five years, a fine, or both. The Bill instead imposes a civil penalty between Rs 10 lakh and one crore rupees.
- **Removal of imprisonment term:** In some cases, the Bill removes the imprisonment term for an offence. For example, under the Indian Succession Act, 1925, failure to surrender revoked probate or letters of administration is punishable with imprisonment up to three months, a fine, or both. Under the Electricity Act, 2003, non-compliance with an order or a direction is punishable with imprisonment up to three months, a fine, or both. The Bill instead imposes only a fine, and also increases the maximum amount of fine.
- **Omission of offences:** The Bill removes several offences. These include offences such as: (i) giving false alarm of fire under the Delhi Police Act, 1978, (ii) failure to give information of births and deaths under the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957, and (iii) making false entries in the register of copyrights under the Copyright Act, 1957.
- **Revision of fines and penalties:** The Bill revises the monetary value of fines and penalties for several offences. It further provides that fines and penalties specified by it will increase by 10% of the respective minimum amount every three years.
- **Warnings on first and second offences:** The Bill amends some Acts to provide for advisories or warnings in the first or second instances of an offence. For example, under the Apprentices Act, 1961, offences punishable with fines include refusing to furnish information, and requiring an apprentice to work overtime. The Bill provides that an advisory will be issued for the first contravention, and a warning will be issued for the second contravention. A civil penalty will be imposed for subsequent contraventions.
- **Improvement notices:** The Bill introduces improvement notices under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009. Under this Act, several offences, such as manufacturing, using, or selling non-standard weights and measures, are punishable with fines. The Bill instead provides that an improvement notice may be issued in case of the first offence. Such notices require rectifying non-compliance within a specified time. In certain cases, a civil penalty will be imposed for the second offence, and subsequent offences will be punishable with a criminal fine.
- **Adjudication of penalties:** The Bill amends certain Acts to provide for the appointment of adjudicating officers to hold inquiries and adjudicate penalties. It also provides for appointment of appellate authorities to hear appeals against decisions of adjudicating officers.
- **Property tax and advertisement tax in New Delhi municipal area:** The Bill amends the New Delhi Municipal Council Act, 1994. The Act provides for the levy of property tax. The Bill specifies that property tax will consist of a building tax and a vacant land tax. It establishes a Municipal Valuation Committee to recommend base value for vacant lands and buildings, and manner of determining and revising property tax. The Bill sets up a Hardship and Anomaly Committee to address grievances regarding property tax. The Bill also removes provisions for levying advertisement tax.
- **Manner of revision of fines and penalties under Jan Vishwas Act of 2023:** The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act, 2023 provides for revision of fines and penalties specified by it every three years. The Bill adds that if any Act already prescribes its own method of revision, the method in that Act will apply.

DISCLAIMER: This document is being furnished to you for your information. You may choose to reproduce or redistribute this report for non-commercial purposes in part or in full to any other person with due acknowledgement of PRS Legislative Research ("PRS"). The opinions expressed herein are entirely those of the author(s). PRS makes every effort to use reliable and comprehensive information, but PRS does not represent that the contents of the report are accurate or complete. PRS is an independent, not-for-profit group. This document has been prepared without regard to the objectives or opinions of those who may receive it.